

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MUNICH 01632 301539Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----041500 301547Z /41
R 301512Z MAR 78
FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0123
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUNICH 01632

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

FOR EUR LUERS AND EUR/EE SEYMOUR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: SOPN
SUBJECT: DIFFICULTIES IN RADIO LIBERTY'S RUSSIAN SERVICE

1. CONGEN HAS LEARNED THAT VLADIMIR MATUSEVITCH, RL SENIOR STAFF COMMENTATOR AND FORMER MANAGING EDITOR OF THE RUSSIAN SERVICE, WROTE LETTER TO BIB CHAIRMAN GRONOUSKI ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO STRONGLY CRITICIZING PRESENT MANAGEMENT OF RL RUSSIAN SERVICE.

2. LETTER APPARENTLY ALLEGES THAT PRESENT RFE/RL MANAGEMENT HAS PERPETUATED AND EVEN STRENGTHENED THE MANAGERIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WHICH FORMER RL DIRECTOR RONALDS LEFT BEHIND. LETTER REPORTEDLY CLAIMS THAT THOSE PRESENTLY IN CHARGE OF RUSSIAN SERVICE ARE INCOMPETENT AND PARTIAL TO A PARTICULAR POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW (I.E. PARTIAL TO GREAT RUSSIAN, ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC POINT OF VIEW). LETTER THEN CITES SERIES OF EXAMPLES OF ALLEGED INCOMPETENCE AND POLITICAL BIAS IN RL RUSSIAN BROADCASTS IN RECENT MONTHS.
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3. MATUSEVITCH APPARENTLY JUSTIFIES HIS DECISION TO WRITE GRONOUSKI ON GROUND THAT IT IS NO REPEAT NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO APPEAL TO RFE/RL MANAGEMENT HERE FOR EFFECTIVE REMEDIAL ACTION. MATUSEVITCH REPORTEDLY MAKES IT CLEAR THAT ALTHOUGH PRESENT LETTER REPRESENTS EFFORT TO REMAIN WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF BIB-RFE/RL STRUCTURE, HE

WILL APPROACH MEMBERS OF U.S. CONGRESS IF REMEDIAL ACTION
IS NOT REPEAT NOT FORTHCOMING.

4. UNDERSTAND THAT RFE/RL CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND OPERATING
OFFICER BUCHAN, WHO IS CURRENTLY IN WASHINGTON, HAS MET
WITH BIB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERTS TO DISCUSS CONTENTS
OF LETTER AS WELL AS STRATEGY FOR RESPONDING TO IT.
RFE/RL MANAGEMENT HOPES GRONOUSKI WILL RESPOND BY
ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF LETTER, NOTING THAT MATUSEVITCH
FURNISHED INFO COPIES TO RFE/RL MANAGEMENT AND SUGGESTING
THAT MATUSEVITCH TAKE UP THE PROBLEMS OUTLINED IN LETTER
WITH RFE/RL MANAGEMENT IN MUNICH.

5. COMMENT. DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY BONN WILL RECALL THAT
IT WAS MATUSEVITCH WHO WROTE LETTER TO AMBASSADOR STOESSEL
DATED FEBRUARY 28, 1977, REQUESTING AN INVESTIGATION OF
ALLEGED ANTI-SEMITISM AT RL. EARLIER THIS YEAR,
MATUSEVITCH MADE UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO CALL ON CONGEN
POLOFF TO DISCUSS HIS DIFFERENCES WITH PRESENT RL MANAGE-
MENT. POLOFF ADVISED RFE/RL MANAGEMENT HERE OF MATU-
SEVITCH'S REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT AND EXPRESSED CONVICTION
THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE REPEAT UNWISE FOR CONGEN TO BE-
COME INVOLVED IN WHAT WAS ESSENTIALLY AN INTERNAL RFE/RL
MATTER. RFE/RL MANAGEMENT EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH THIS
POSITION.

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6. CONGEN DOES NOT REPEAT NOT SEE ANY ROLE DEPARTMENT
MIGHT USEFULLY PLAY IN THIS MATTER. PURPOSE OF THIS
MESSAGE IS TO MAKE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY BONN AWARE
OF DEVELOPMENT IN RL RUSSIAN SERVICE WHICH COULD GENERATE
RENEWED CONTROVERSY IF IT WERE TO BECOME PUBLIC
KNOWLEDGE. BETTS

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Message Attributes

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